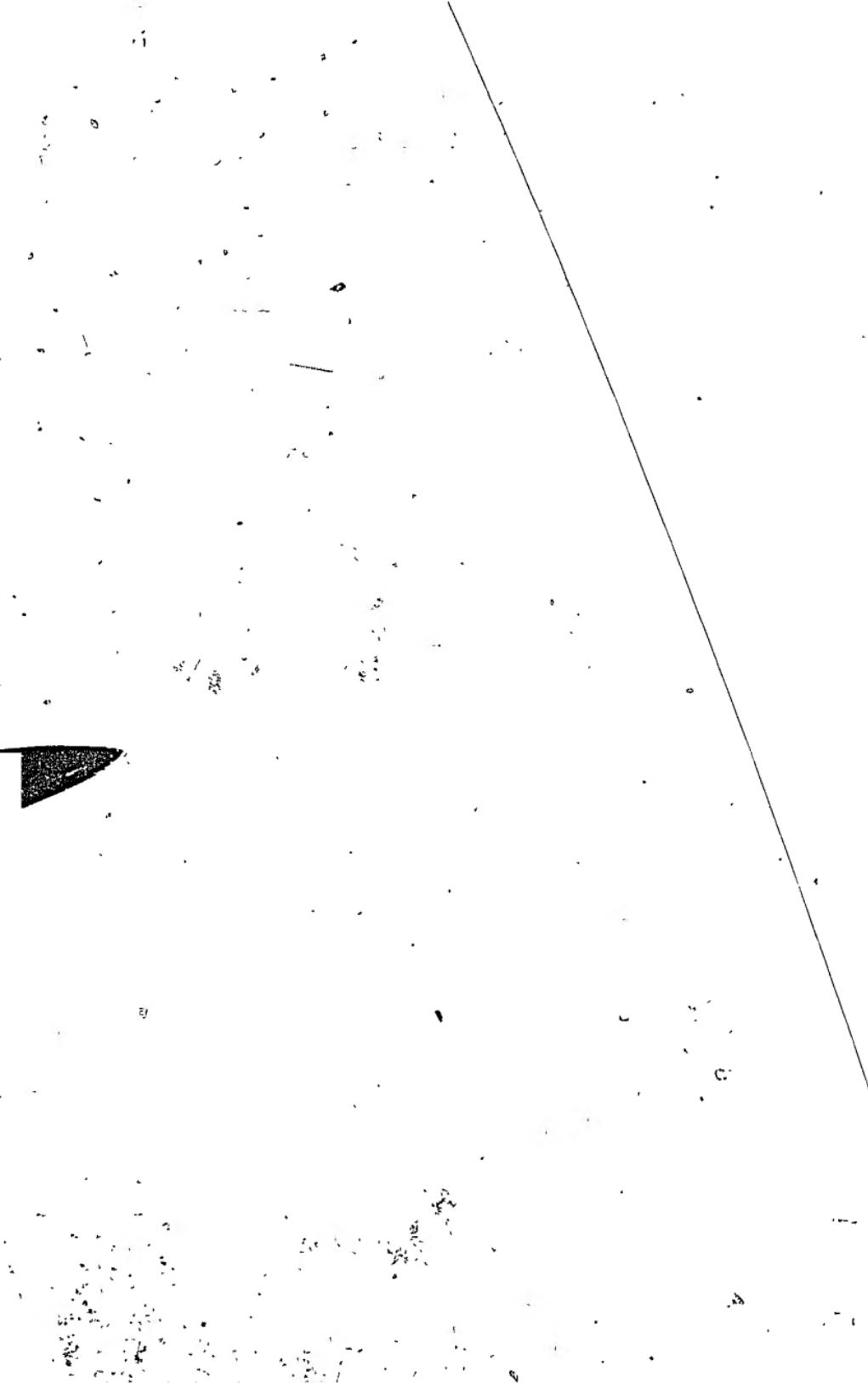




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SEVENTEEN YEARS IN THE CANADIAN NORTH-WEST
A Paper

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BY
ALEXANDER BEGG, Esq.

WITH THE DISCUSSION THEREON

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SEVENTEEN YEARS IN THE CANADIAN NORTH-WEST.
BY
ALEXANDER BEGG.

It is difficult to understand how a country so vast in extent and rich in resources as that now known as the Canadian North-West should have so long escaped the attention of the civilised world. For ages those fertile territories lay dormant—a great wilderness of waste, unknown except to the red man and the fur trader; and only now is the value and importance of North-Western Canada beginning to dawn upon the minds of people on this side of the Atlantic.

Perhaps, if we take a slight glance at the early history of the country, we may be able to discover some reason for this long and singular absence of development in a land which is now found to be teeming with fruitfulness. In 1670 (over two hundred years ago) Prince Rupert, with a number of English noblemen and gentlemen, succeeded in obtaining a charter from Charles II., the ostensible object of which, as then stated, was to push trade in the direction of the North Pole, and to find, if possible, a new passage to the South Sea. The practical effect of the charter, however, was to secure to Prince Rupert and his colleagues proprietary rights over a considerable portion of the North-West. The validity of the charter has been frequently questioned, on the ground that at the time it was granted the country did not belong to England, but to France. This was the commencement of that great corporation, the Hudson's Bay Company. In 1700 fur traders from France are known to have penetrated the country as far as the Assiniboine Valley, and in 1784 the North-West Company of Montreal was formed. The Hudson's Bay Company, therefore, in spite of their charter, did not have things all their own way, and naturally a fierce spirit of rivalry sprang up between them and the other companies interested in the fur trade. So strong, indeed, became the competition that it resulted in great loss of property and life in the frequent conflicts that took place; and this state of affairs lasted till 1820, when a fusion of the different fur companies was effected,

by which they agreed to trade together under the original charter of the Hudson's Bay Company. In 1821 the company was reconstructed, and was granted by Act of Parliament the exclusive fur trade in the North-West for a period of twenty-one years. In 1838 the licence granted under the Act of 1821 was surrendered, and a new arrangement made for a better union of the different interests represented in the company. A renewal of the licence was then applied for and granted on May 30, so that the monopoly of the fur trade claimed by the Hudson's Bay Company really expired on May 30, 1859. For ten years or more, however, after that date the fur trade remained the principal business, and, in reality, the controlling power in the country.

Having once been a fur trader myself, I may perhaps be allowed to remark that fur trading and civilisation cannot very well go hand in hand; the latter invariably puts an end to the former. The Hudson's Bay Company and the fur traders knew this; it was not their business to develop the country, but to prosecute the fur trade and they could hardly be expected to encourage settlement, and thereby damage their legitimate calling. Neither is it to be wondered at if they sought to underrate the resources of the country in order to prevent the incoming of settlers. In fact, so strong was the feeling against settlement, that it became a sort of fixed principle with the fur traders that the North-West was not and never could be fit for aught but fur trading. And I am inclined to think that most of them believed in the truth of this principle. As an instance, we find the Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company, Sir George Simpson, in 1857, making the broad statement before a committee of the British House of Commons, that no portion of the country was, in his opinion, suitable for successful settlement. Whether spirits walk the earth, we cannot tell, but were the ghost of Sir George Simpson to visit the North-West to-day, Sir George in the spirit would, I fancy, be inclined to reverse the verdict given by Sir George in the flesh. One dare not suppose what the latter would say did he know that his old company were now offering for sale 8,000,000 acres of farming and grazing lands in the very country he himself described as unsuitable for settlement.

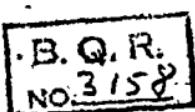
Whilst, however, one cannot exonerate the fur traders from a desire to keep back settlement in the North-West, and from frequently misrepresenting the country to serve their own purposes, yet it must be remembered that there were also physical causes which prevented its rapid development. South of the international boundary line lay an immense area of prairie land without people or the proper means of communication, and the Canadian North-West was consequently in a position of almost complete isolation, and unprepared to receive settlers. This was, doubtless, the principal cause of its tardy development.

When I first went to the North-West, in 1867, the railway system of the United States had not reached as far west as St. Paul, and the only means of communication with that city was the Mississippi

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steamboat in summer and the stage in winter. What a change has since taken place! How vast a network of railways has been built during the past seventeen years throughout the entire country, reaching even to the Pacific Ocean! I remember well the difficulties experienced during my first trip to Fort Garry, the site of the present city of Winnipeg. An Indian pony attached to a rude ox-cart was the only conveyance to be had, and with that I set out to travel some 500 miles over the houseless prairie to my destination. It happened to be an unusually trying season for mosquitoes, and had I not been fortunate enough to fall in with a party of traders on their way home, I fear I never could have accomplished the journey.

Day after day we travelled—starting at daybreak and journeying till the heat compelled us to encamp. In the cool of the evening we again harnessed our horses and travelled till dusk, and so we continued for nearly three weeks, the heat and the flies allowing us to make but slow progress. To-day you may make the journey in twenty-four hours, seated in a comfortable Pullman car, instead of the rude ox-cart of former years. When I first travelled over the route no houses were to be met with—no settlers to offer you hospitality—and the cart-trail of the prairie was the only mark to guide you on your way. Now the country is studded with farms and farm-houses; cities, towns, and villages have sprung into existence, and railways are to be found running in every direction. An incident connected with that trip may interest you. One of the traders in our party had with him a white horse, which invariably each night singled me out as I lay wrapped in my blanket under my cart, and did me the honour of knocking the mosquitoes off his nose against my head. I bore the infliction of the white horse for several nights, but at last determined to get rid of him. For that purpose I placed a stick with one end in the camp fire, the other ready to take hold of when required. Then, wrapped in my blanket, I waited. Presently round came my friend, sniffing at my head as usual. With a bound I caught the lighted stick, and made after my tormentor, and he, supposing, no doubt, the de'il was after him, galloped off into the darkness as fast as his hobble would permit him. Suddenly he disappeared from view and I returned to camp, thankful for being rid of him. In the morning there was a great outcry for the white horse, but no white horse was there; and being a stranger, and not knowing the ways of the country, I discreetly held my tongue. A personal examination, however, showed me that I had driven the poor brute to the edge of the river bank, which was steep at that point, and he, toppling over into the water, was very likely drowned; at least he has never been seen from that day to this. Speaking of white horses reminds me that in the old days the Indian squaws had a great partiality to white horse hairs for fancy work, and used to rob the poor beasts mercilessly. Often would one see a white horse with but an apology for a tail, the hairs having gone to add to the finery of some Indian "brave."

To resume, however. We had during all this time been travelling on American soil, but when about sixty miles from our destination we crossed the international boundary, and passed from the United States into British territory. Never shall I forget the scene that presented itself when I first saw Fort Garry. Hundreds of Indian lodges and tepees covered the plain, many of the aborigines and plain hunters having congregated at the spot to obtain supplies for the winter hunt. Half a mile from the fort stood about a dozen houses, the homes and shops of the free traders, and there were not, I suppose, one hundred white men, all told, living in the place where to-day is a city of over 30,000 inhabitants. Signs of an approaching change in the form of government were apparent when I arrived in the country. The Hudson's Bay Company were the ostensible rulers, and under their jurisdiction a court was held regularly for the settlement of disputes, and a tax of .4 per cent. levied on all imports; but there lacked respect for the authority of the company's officers. The *Nor'-Wester*, a rabid little newspaper, published in the neighbourhood of Fort Garry, bitterly opposed the company, and assisted in no small degree in fanning popular discontent. The first few years I spent in the North-West under the Hudson's Bay Company's rule were nevertheless amongst the happiest of my life. No nearer approach to perfect freedom have I ever seen or known. No burdensome taxes, no exacting laws, no lawyers, no rents; every man free to do as he liked so long as he held in proper regard the person and property of his neighbour. A single constable represented the police force, but even the dignity of this worthy functionary did not at times prevent the key of his own gaol being turned upon him by the young men when bent upon enjoying themselves. But people never know when they are well off, and therefore, as I have already said, a desire for change began to show itself.

A few miles north of Fort Garry was a settlement consisting of the descendants of the hardy sons of Scotland, who came to the North-West in 1812 and 1814, under the care of Lord Selkirk. Time would fail me to recount the many hardships and trials these settlers endured from depredations by Indians, from floods, and other disasters, but some idea of their pluck and perseverance is shown by the fact that it was not till 1827 that they became really settled in their homes. Fifteen years' battle with adversity could not break the Scottish spirit of these pioneers; and to-day their settlement, known as the parish of Kildonan, is one of the finest spots in the whole North-West.

Soon after my arrival I became connected with the fur trade, joining the free traders, in opposition to the Hudson's Bay Company. The firm in which I became a partner employed many traders, to whom we granted outfits or supplies of goods, ranging from 300*l.* to 1,000*l.* each in value. Our mode was to place a hundred per cent. advance on the first cost of the goods, and at that rate they were invoiced to the traders, who then bartered them

for furs. If the catch happened to be good we were the gainers; if bad, often considerable losers. It was, in fact, a game of chance. There were two sets of men we had to deal with: the plain hunters and fur traders. The former were, as a rule, splendid fellows; the latter too frequently thriftless and given to drink. It was customary in the early days for the plain hunters to combine together to form a large party—a brigade sometimes consisting of over 1,200 carts, as many horses, and some six or seven hundred oxen. Each party framed laws for the government of its members, and for days and days they would travel over the open prairie, until they approached the vicinity of the buffalo, when they would form a stationary camp.

It was a rule of the plain not to hunt the buffalo singly. The hunters went out in a body on horses trained for the purpose. Slowly they would approach the herd, until the word was given by the leader—"Ho!" Then it was each man for himself. Away they sped, dashing in amongst the frightened buffaloes; right and left the hunters fired, the horses, trained for the purpose, guiding themselves, and leaving the rider free to kill as he rode. The hunt would extend sometimes for miles. Then the return to camp was sounded, and so familiar were the men with the work that each one could single out the animals he had slain. Next came the skinning of the buffalo, and the preparation of the meat by sun-drying; and when sufficient had been collected to fill the carts the party returned to the traders who had supplied the outfit to render an account of the trip. In the finer furs—such as mink, marten, beaver, &c.—the traders had to deal with the wood Indians.

Sometimes, especially in the winter, we traders had to endure what may be termed hardships in the prosecution of our business. Frequently we had to travel for miles over the snow with sleds. These consisted of a broad board turned up in front, and drawn by our dogs. Each set of dogs could draw about four hundred pounds, but as the bedding, provisions, and furs belonging to the traveller generally filled the sled, he had to content himself with running on snow-shoes. The dogs were driven by word of mouth—"Chuck" meaning to the right; "Yew," to the left; and "March," forward. I have frequently travelled for hundreds of miles by this means, sleeping on the snow at night with no roof overhead but the clear wintry sky of the North-West, and yet I enjoyed it; never was frost-bitten, and never experienced better health.

I could give you some interesting details of my experience as a fur trader, but time forbids. Enough, however, has been said to show the rude state of the country when I first made the North-West my home. Along the banks of the Red and Assiniboine rivers there were a few scattered settlements, consisting of French, English, and Scotch half-breeds; but there were then few white men in the country. It was generally supposed that settlement could not be successful on the prairie at any distance over a mile from the river. Now the whole plain is dotted with farms and farm-houses. At that time there existed no proper means of

communication with the outside world. The supplies of the settlement had to be brought by ox-carts over the prairie from St. Paul to Fort Garry, a distance of more than 500 miles ; and the mail, conveyed by a carrier on horseback, arrived but once a week. Gradually, however, the civilising influence of the East extended to the Red River.

Well do I remember the advent of the first sewing-machine, and the sensation caused by the arrival of the first piano—truly an event in the history of the settlement. Tallow dips reigned supreme, and the first coal oil was sold at from 14s. to 16s. per gallon. Now, gas and the electric light are common. I had something to do with the introduction of civilised ideas. I formed, for instance, the first theatre in the North-West, and from the stage sprang the first church in Winnipeg. It was in this wise. Having organised an amateur theatrical troupe from native talent, a hall in one of the buildings was fitted up as a theatre. The attempt was crude, it must be admitted, and I don't know that we ever tried "Hamlet," or anything so high-flown. Pantomime was indeed our forte. One day Archdeacon McLean, now Bishop of Saskatchewan, suggested that the theatre should be utilised on Sunday evenings for religious services. Consent was given, and I agreed to act as first sexton. I regret to say, on behalf of the dramatic art, that the Archdeacon drew better audiences on Sunday evening than the theatrical troupe did during the week. The result was a threatened collapse of the floor of the theatre. One Sunday evening, hearing some ominous cracks from the overburdened floor, I rushed out, and with the aid of the shopkeeper underneath, having obtained a number of poplar poles, we propped up the devout worshippers overhead. It was well the services of the church forbade applause, or else I fear the whole congregation would have found themselves in the depths below, rather than in the realms above. It is needless to say there were no more services in that church. The Archdeacon adjourned to the Court-house adjoining Fort Garry, and soon afterwards Holy Trinity was built. Having seen the danger of buildings collapsing and falling to the earth, the idea of preventing them from being blown up was next conceived, and the first general powder-house in the country established; but it was not a success, as you will understand when you know that it was no uncommon thing for a trader to seat himself on a keg of gunpowder near the camp-fire, and smoke his pipe in the most leisurely way. The Hudson's Bay Company were the bankers as well as the rulers of the settlement, and the currency of the country consisted of gold and silver coins and blankets; not the domestic article of that name, but merely a sort of bank-note circulated by the Company in something the same form as that issued by the Bank of England. To bring the settlement into closer communication with the outside world, a stage running three times a week, *via* the United States, was established in 1869.

About this time, also, the dissatisfaction among a certain class of the settlers, to which I have already referred, found vent, and brought about a revolution on a small scale. The excuse for this uprising was that the Canadian authorities, in purchasing the rights of the Hudson's Bay Company, had neglected to provide for representative institutions in the proposed new form of government. The leader of the revolutionary party was Louis Riel, and he was for a time pretty much of a dictator. A provisional government was formed, the Hudson's Bay Company was sent to the right-about, and certain laws were framed; but as a large portion of the English settlers did not agree with Riel and his ways, and so endeavoured to oppose him, continual hubbub reigned in the country for more than a year. About this time the Hon. Donald A. Smith (now one of the directors of the Canadian Pacific Railway, and also a director of the Hudson's Bay Company) arrived in the country, in the capacity of Commissioner on behalf of the Dominion Government. Having been on the spot, and closely watched the proceedings in connection with this uprising, I may be permitted to say that to Mr. Smith's cool-headed judgment and undaunted firmness, combined with a fine sense of fair play, is due the absence of any very serious scenes of bloodshed. The Dominion Government were soon led to see their mistake, and an Act was passed, giving to the people of Manitoba the same representative institutions as those of the other provinces of Canada. Riel abdicated on the near approach of Colonel (now General Lord) Wolseley and his troops, and from that day to this law and order have existed throughout the Canadian North-West.

Settlers now began to arrive in the country in large numbers; some came in waggons, others floated down the Red River in flat boats, the railway having then only reached St. Cloud, a town in Minnesota, a short distance beyond St. Paul. An immediate spread of settlement followed this influx, and to avoid disputes the Dominion Government found it necessary to take steps for the proper survey of the country. Provision was made in 1872 by the Dominion Lands Act for the division of the land into townships, each consisting of thirty-six square miles or sections. A Government Land Office was established, and settlers were allowed to take up free homesteads wherever they were to be found. In the meantime, the stage travelling on alternate days had given place to a daily coach, and in 1871 Mr. James J. Hill, now president of the St. Paul, Minneapolis, and Manitoba Railway Company, placed the first regular passenger and freight steamer on the Red River between Moorhead in Minnesota and Winnipeg in Manitoba. On November 20 of the same year telegraphic communication between Manitoba and the outside world was completed, and on that day the first message (one of congratulation) passed over the wires between the Governor of the North-West, the Hon. Adam G. Archibald, and the Governor-General of Canada, Lord Lisgar.

The local legislature of Manitoba assembled this year for the first time, and simultaneously the agricultural, educational, and religious interests of the province began to take shape for future development. The population of Winnipeg was now estimated at 500 souls, and two years later, when it had reached over 1,500, an agitation commenced for the incorporation of the place as a city. To advance the scheme a newspaper was established, and though strenuous opposition was offered by several officials of the Hudson's Bay Company and some large landed proprietors, who feared taxation on their property, the vulgar mob supported it in their desire for incorporation. Noisy meetings were held, the Legislature was petitioned, and a measure introduced, but the landed proprietors had the ear of the legislators, and the Incorporation Bill was thrown out. One night, however, some unknown individuals caught the Speaker of the House, and administered to him a taste of tar and feathers. The Government, finding the people determined, did as all Governments must do under such circumstances: the Incorporation Bill was passed, and the city of Winnipeg sprang into existence. During all this time the fleet of steamers on the Red River had been steadily increasing, and there were now some half-dozen plying on its waters. The daily stage was also continued, and these improved means of communication caused a rapid increase in the area of settlement. Still it was slow work, especially as, after arriving in Winnipeg, settlers could only move further westward by the use of the ox-cart or wagon. But the railway was fast approaching. Mr. George Stephen, the Hon. Donald A. Smith, and Mr. James J. Hill, now amongst the principal promoters of the Canadian Pacific Railway, had obtained possession of the St. Paul, Minneapolis, and Manitoba Railway, and were pushing it with remarkable energy in the direction of the Canadian North-West. It was through the efforts of these gentlemen that the first railway train was run into Winnipeg in 1878; and from that time a new era dawned on the North-West. Still, of that great country the threshold only had been reached. We have seen how the ox-cart gave way to the stage, the stage to the steamer, and the steamer to the railway, and yet Winnipeg was but the resting-place of settlers: the great wheatfields to the West remained comparatively unknown. The Canadian Government had, however, entered into an agreement with British Columbia to build a railway across the continent to the Pacific Ocean, and were bound to carry out that undertaking. Governments are not, as a rule, good railway constructors, and this the Dominion found to its cost. After repeated failures and heavy losses the Canadian authorities finally concluded to give up the attempt, and hand the work over to a private company; and in December, 1880, an agreement was entered into with the present Canadian Pacific Railway to undertake the building of the road. In the following spring (not quite three years ago) work was commenced in earnest.

We must now, however, retrace our steps, and see what was taking place in the meantime in the North-West. The educational interests were receiving much attention, and with wonderful rapidity new school districts were being established throughout the country. In religious matters the different denominations were gaining ground. Municipal organisation was being widely discussed, and attention called to the drainage of the low-lying lands in the country. Each sitting of the Legislature left the laws more suited to the requirements of the people. The progress of the principal city, Winnipeg, was, indeed, astonishing; and yet, in comparison with the last two or three years, the country, as a whole, may be described as being at a standstill. And why? Because there was no railway development west of the Red River. The great wheatfields, to-day so eagerly sought after, were shut up from the outside world, almost unknown, or at least unappreciated. The old curse of isolation had not been done away with. Winnipeg, however, flourished, and the country in the immediate vicinity became thickly settled. The fur trade collapsed in the face of advancing civilisation, and the Indians and traders retired from their old camping-ground. Fine buildings were now to be found in the city, with handsome streets and broad sidewalks. The little Holy Trinity gave way to a handsome place of worship; other churches and public buildings were erected; theatricals, other than the pantomime, came into vogue. Daily and weekly newspapers were established; and the population, from 500 in 1871, jumped to 10,000 in 1880. But the real advancement of the country as a whole was yet to come, as we shall presently see.

An important event in the history of the Canadian North-West was the visit of Lord Dufferin, the Governor-General of Canada. He was undoubtedly a popular Governor, and the people of Manitoba, fully appreciating the importance of his visit, did their best to make his sojourn a pleasant one. He was feted everywhere, and made some telling speeches on his experience in the country. The words of Lord Dufferin went far and wide, and did much to bring the country to the fore. In 1881 our late Governor-General, the Marquis of Lorne, also visited the North-West, and he, not content with visiting the threshold, penetrated as far as the eastern base of the Rocky Mountains, and that, too, at a time when almost the entire distance had to be travelled by means of horses, the railway having then only reached a distance of about sixty miles beyond Winnipeg. While not wishing to detract from the importance of Lord Dufferin's visit to the country, the trip of the Marquis of Lorne through the entire land was, I believe, the turning-point in the history of the North-West. It was the glowing impressions he formed, and the faithful reproduction of them in the speeches he delivered on his return, that first awakened the interest of capitalists and settlers all over the world.

But to resume. The signing of the contract between the Dominion Government and the Canadian Pacific Railway Company.

was the signal for arousing the North-West from its previous lethargy. The spring of 1881 saw the inauguration of a new state of affairs. The country seemed at one moment to spring to life and vigour. It was evident that the gentlemen comprising the Canadian Pacific Railway Company were men of energy as well as men of business. The railway westward from Winnipeg was at once pushed forward; and last season the rate of construction surpassed anything ever accomplished on the American continent, while the road is at the present time finished and in running order for over 900 miles west of Winnipeg. In addition to this the more eastern sections—namely, between Montreal and Algoma, a distance of 539 miles, and from Port Arthur, on Lake Superior, to Winnipeg, 435 miles—will be ready for traffic this spring. The company, with its branches, will thus have some 2,000 miles in operation this season, not quite three years since the charter was granted. Three large steel steamers, of about 2,000 tons each, built last summer in Glasgow, are being placed on the lakes to run in connection with the system, so that the Canadian Pacific Railway is this spring taking passengers over its own line from Montreal direct to the Rocky Mountains entirely through Canadian territory.

In 1868, or about fifteen years ago, I accompanied, along a part of the route, the first exploring party of the Northern Pacific Railway. Thirteen years afterwards, in 1881, the Canadian Pacific Railway was commenced, and yet the two companies to-day have about the same mileage in operation. What a contrast in energy and success!

There is still, however, work to be done to complete the all-rail connection between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, and it is satisfactory to note that the work of construction is to be carried on this year with the same vigour that has so marked the operations of the company in the past. The track has now been laid from Port Arthur, the western Lake Superior port of the system, for a distance eastward over the north of the lake of some 100 miles, and is to be pushed forward rapidly during the coming season. In the Rocky Mountains the work of construction is to be resumed this month, and the track laid from the summit of the Kicking Horse Pass, which was the point reached last season, westward through British Columbia; and it is confidently expected that the whole line will be completed by the end of 1885. One point that forcibly strikes the traveller is the solidity that has marked the construction of this national Canadian highway from the outset. The road is graded several feet above the surface of the prairie, creeks and rivers are spanned by substantial bridges, and stations are provided with commodious sidings and buildings. This superiority of construction was last winter put to the test, and it is worthy of note that, as compared to railroads in a more southerly direction, where snow blockades have been frequent, the Canadian Pacific Railway has been almost entirely free from them. Indeed, a number of eminent railway men in the United States,

having travelled over the line, pronounced it to be one of the best-built roads in North America.

Returning, however, to history, this activity in railway matters was the key-note to the rapid development of the North-West. Winnipeg benefited in a remarkable degree. The trade of the city flourished, population increased by thousands, houses sprang up like mushrooms in every direction, people for a time went wild with speculation, and real estate in the city fetched fabulous prices. But this state of affairs could not in the nature of things be permanent. Other places along the line of railway soon rose to compete for the trade of Winnipeg. Emigrants hastened west over the railway to their prairie homes, without even stopping to purchase supplies at Winnipeg. Capitalists saw opportunities to invest in other rising places, and for a time the chief city of the North-West suffered what has been called a collapse, but which in reality was an ordeal, certain to result favourably in the end. The character of the city of Winnipeg is to-day undergoing a change which must ultimately increase its importance. Standing at the confluence of the Red and Assiniboine rivers, and being, as it were, the doorway to the great prairie region beyond, its position as the chief distributing point is assured. It can boast of broad, well-laid-out streets. It has also horse tramways, an opera house, and many fine churches and public buildings, including the Parliament Houses recently erected. It is fast becoming a wholesale mart for the supply of the smaller merchants to the West, and its peculiarly favourable situation must make it in the future, as it is now, the chief city of the Canadian North-West.

As an instance of the wonderful growth, it may be mentioned that in 1874 the number of inhabitants was estimated at 2,000, and the assessment value of real and personal property at a little over $2\frac{1}{2}$ million dollars, while in 1883 the population had increased to 30,000, and the assessment to over $32\frac{1}{2}$ million dollars.

The rapid construction of the railway is undoubtedly the secret of the wonderful increase in the tide of emigration to this vast country. When you consider that at one time emigrants, after arriving at Winnipeg, had to depend on the slow, tedious means of travelling by oxen or horses and wagons to reach any point westward on the prairie, whereas to-day they can ride comfortably in a railway carriage to within a few miles of their destination, you will understand the impetus which the opening of the railway is giving to the development of the country, and why settlers are flocking there from all parts in such numbers. Isolation, the old curse of the land, has disappeared, and the value of the great fertile plains, so long dormant, is at last beginning to be understood.

The rapidity with which towns have sprung into existence along the line of railway is indeed marvellous. The time at my disposal will not permit me to give more than one or two instances. Portage-la Prairie, fifty-six miles west of Winnipeg, though as old as the

chief city itself, did not increase in size and importance to any extent until the railway was built. Now it has several thousand inhabitants, and is steadily growing as a mercantile and manufacturing centre. Passing on our way no less than ten minor towns, we come to Brandon, which in 1881 was open prairie, but which to-day can boast of over 3,000 inhabitants. Several mills and other manufactures are established there, and the future success of this young city is assured. We then pass thirteen towns at distances of from nine to ten miles from each other, and come to Broadview, which though in 1882 boasting only of a few tents and roughly-boarded houses, is now a well-laid-out town, and being situated in the midst of a fine farming country, it is a great market centre. Six stations are established between Broadview and Qu'Appelle, the latter a thriving place, owing to its proximity to the fertile agricultural district lying to the north. The Qu'Appelle valley is already famous, and is thickly peopled with the very best class of settlers. Here is situated the famous Bell Farm. This estate was organised in 1882, and had under crop, in 1883, 4,000 acres, which yielded an average of twenty-two bushels of wheat per acre from the sod, i.e., without backsetting. The company are preparing to put under crop 10,000 acres during the season of this year. No less than 10,000 bushels of last year's crops were sold for export at a good profit. The great success attending the operations on this farm illustrates the facility with which wheat can be grown in the North-West and sold at a profit to Eastern buyers. Thirty-three miles further on, or 356 miles west of Winnipeg, is the city of Regina. I visited the spot in 1882, the railway not having then reached so far, and I found just three large canvas tents pitched on the site of the present capital of the North-West Territories. To-day the railway is constructed and in running order over 500 miles beyond that point, and Regina has grown into a place of considerable importance. Rows of good substantial houses are built, wide streets laid out, hotels and public buildings erected, and a very good newspaper established. The land in the neighbourhood is considered the best and strongest wheat-producing land in the North-West. Forty-two miles west of Regina is Moose Jaw, which bids fair to rival the capital itself, and every nine or ten miles further west is a station, around which the nuclei of numerous towns and villages are being formed, until we reach Calgary. Some doubt has been expressed as to the agricultural capabilities of this land lying between Moose Jaw and Calgary, on each side of the Canadian Pacific Railway; and the railway company, to get at the truth, last autumn established ten test farms, from thirty to forty miles apart, along the whole distance—over 440 miles. An average of more than twenty-five acres was broken on each farm, care having been taken to select sites composed of lands representing the fair average quality of the whole tract. The land on the first eight farms was found to be "excellent for general farming,"

varying from a clay to a sandy loam of from 5 inches to 12 inches in depth, with a sandy clay subsoil; while the land at the west end of the tract is a rich dark loam, 8 inches to 14 inches deep, with a sandy clay subsoil. Those who have examined the lands express themselves confident of their fertility, and it is but reasonable to look for the early settlement of this large section of the North-West. The railway is now built some distance beyond Calgary; but, in my opinion, this place, owing to the vicinity of the great cattle ranches to the south and the fine agricultural land surrounding it, is destined to be one of the most important cities in the North-West. Knowledge gained from my fellow-traders, in the old days, led me to look forward to the time when rich gold and silver deposits would be found in the Rocky Mountains. This has already to some extent taken place; and altogether I am inclined to place great faith in the future of Calgary. Another circumstance that will add largely to the attractiveness of that region east of the mountains, more especially to tourists, is the opening up of a national Canadian park. Reports recently to hand from Winnipeg state that a representative of the Dominion Government has, for some time past, been engaged in laying out a national Canadian park in the neighbourhood of the Rocky Mountains. The site chosen is about sixty-four miles beyond Calgary, the present western terminus of the Canadian Pacific Railway, and is in the first range of the mountains. The park is well laid out, covering an area of 1,200 acres, and is described as rivaling in scenery the beauties of Yellowstone Park, the national park of the Western States of America. The surface is rugged and broken with rocky cliffs, interspersed with lakes and springs, while the whole is heavily timbered. The Canadian Pacific Railway will pass through the grounds, and there is said to be a probability of a large summer hotel being erected for excursionists.

Before giving you some details of the capabilities of the North-West for settlement, I should like to speak of the Indians. The noble red man depicted by Fenimore Cooper has, I fear, long since passed away, if ever he existed. From my experience amongst them, the Indians, with few exceptions, possess little nobility of character; they are, as a rule, dirty, often cruel, and treacherous. Their one redeeming quality is gratitude for kindness shown them. When I first visited the country there were, it was estimated, somewhere about 45,000 Indians between the Red River and the Rocky Mountains, the principal tribes being the Plain and Wood Crees, Blackfeet, Saulteaux, and Swampies. There were also minor tribes scattered throughout the country. The Blackfeet were considered the most treacherous, and on several occasions, very many years ago, they attacked trains of carts for the sake of plunder; but the Canadian North-West has never had an actual outbreak among the Indian tribes within its territories. This happy feature—in such marked contrast with the experience of the

States of the Union to the south—is due to the honourable and judicious treatment the red man received at the hands of the Hudson's Bay Company in the past; and to the wisdom of the Dominion Government in making fair treaties with him for the maintenance of his rights, and faithfully carrying out their part of them. Six treaties, in all, were made with the Indians; but as I am unable here to-night to go into any particulars concerning them, I will merely say that certain sums of money, accompanied by clothes and provisions, are distributed each year by the Government amongst the different tribes, and reserves are laid out on which the Indians are expected to live, thus leaving the rest of the country for undisturbed settlement. The Canadian Government have, moreover, established Indian schools throughout the country, in which the young Indians are taught and trained, and in this way the position of the Canadian red man will, it is hoped, be greatly improved in the near future. The Indians of the Canadian North-West will never, I believe, become thoroughly civilised, yet it is pleasing to note that they are making progress in farming and domestic life, which is astonishing when compared with that of the tribes south of the boundary line. The mounted police—though few in number when one thinks of the vast country under their charge—have, more by moral influence than physical force, taught the Indians to respect the laws of the land; and thus there is no Indian problem to solve in Canada, as there is in the United States. In these efforts of the Indian to adapt himself to the altered circumstances of the time, he is receiving much encouragement from the Canadian Government. The Premier, Sir John A. Macdonald has recently introduced into the Dominion Parliament a Bill by which a system of councils provides some measure of local self-government among the tribes; and this cannot but be regarded as a step in the right direction in their education for the duties of citizenship. Experience has taught the red man that so long as he is in British territory the same justice will be meted out to him as to the white man. Were it not for this strict impartiality no such small body of men as the mounted police could preserve order in so vast an extent of country as the North-West territories.

I could give you many interesting narratives of my experience amongst the Indians, but I fear to occupy too much of your time. One incident, however, I may give to illustrate their sense of gratitude. An old chief named Nichy, and his squaw, used regularly to visit the house of one of my friends, and his wife as regularly sent them away with a supply of tea, tobacco, scraps, and any cast-off clothing she had to spare. Some time afterwards the lady became very ill, and was confined to her bed for some three or four months, during which time Nichy was, of course, unable to see her. It was noticed, however, that he and his squaw came prowling about the house as if to try to catch a sight of her. One day, when the lady was convalescent, Nichy crept up,

and, peering through the window of her bedroom, caught sight of her pale thin face. Capering about like a child, his joy seemed boundless; and creeping softly to the kitchen door, he stood waiting there. The lady had seen him, and insisted upon his being brought in to see her. Nichy stood over six feet, and in a soft, almost reverential, way he stole on tiptoe into the room, and then stood perfectly still, making signs, but fearing to speak lest he should disturb the patient. The next evening Nichy and his squaw were seen coming over the hill; he carrying a pair of ducks, she an immense bag of something on her back, which afterwards was discovered to be feathers enough for a large bed and several pillows; and not a day passed during the lady's illness but Nichy brought either a brace of chickens or ducks, leaving them in the kitchen for her. What stronger instance could you have of Indian gratitude? I am frequently asked: Is there any danger from Indians in the Canadian North-West? There is not the slightest chance of any such trouble. The Canadian Pacific Railway has been built from Winnipeg to the Rocky Mountains without a single case of disturbance from the red men. The only incident that has come to my knowledge at all approaching anything of this kind happened when I was last in the country. A band of Indians surrounded a locomotive as it stood on the track, and having apparently never before seen so formidable a structure, inspected it minutely and with evident curiosity. Suddenly the engineer blew the whistle, and never was there seen such a scramble, as, tumbling over each other in all directions, they mounted their horses in hot haste, and sped over the hills as fast as their horses would carry them.

The name of Her Gracious Majesty is dear to every loyal subject of Great Britain; and over the sea, amongst the red men of the Canadian prairies, the name of our Queen is revered in a manner that cannot but bring a throb of pride to every truly loyal British heart. The "Great Mother" (for that is the name by which our Queen is known to the red man) is to him the personification of goodness, truth, and power. I have seen a chief rid himself of his blanket, his gun, his horse, his squaw—leave himself naked even, to gratify his love for gambling; but only with his life would he part with the silver medal suspended on his breast, given him by that Great Mother.

Very few have, I suppose, any correct idea of the extent of the country I have been describing. No better estimate of its vastness can be formed than by quoting figures, though I have no intention of troubling you with many of them. The territory of the great Canadian North-West lying east of the Rocky Mountains contains more than $2\frac{1}{2}$ million square miles, or over 15 hundred million acres. It is difficult to realise the extent of areas thus stated, but when it is remembered that these figures represent a territory in extent nearly two-thirds of the entire continent of Europe, some idea of its vastness may be formed. A report of the Canadian

Secretary of State apportions these areas thus: 76,800,000 acres are described as pure prairie lands, 300,000,000 part timber and part prairie, all suitable for the cultivation of wheat and other cereals; 600,000,000 suitable for the cultivation of barley, potatoes, and grasses, and having sufficient timber for ordinary purposes; while over 400,000,000 are described as rock and swamp. Later investigations and explorations place the area suitable for successful cultivation and settlement at somewhere exceeding 300,000,000 acres, and the country is represented on excellent authority as capable of sustaining over 50,000,000 of people. It will thus be seen that there is in this new country no lack of room.

Commencing at Port Arthur, on Lake Superior, you travel through a thickly-wooded country, which recent discoveries have gone far to prove to be also rich in minerals, and to contain a fair percentage of agricultural land. Considerable activity was shown during last season in mining operations in the country lying between the Red River and Lake Superior, which is now being opened up by the Lake Superior section of the Canadian Pacific Railway. Several workings of gold, silver, and copper have been carried on, but operations are greatly restricted by the want of capital and of practical men. The mining law is a good one. Patents in fee simple to the land can be had from the Government for one dollar (4s.) per acre; and, when in unsurveyed territory, the discoverer or patentee pays his own surveyor's expenses. There are, moreover, no royalties or Crown dues on the minerals. Mining timber and good supplies of water are said to be plentiful, and the mineral beds being of great extent and value, there is every reason to believe that the excellent railway facilities now provided will lead to the opening up of a great mining industry. The district along the banks of the Rainy River is especially worthy of mention, having already attracted a large number of settlers to establish their homes there. The scenery along the route from Lake Superior to the Red River is in many places magnificent, and when you come to Rat Portage—a distance of 135 miles east of Winnipeg—you find there probably the finest water-power in America, as it is acknowledged to be far superior to that of Minneapolis, and Minneapolis water-power is known as the most valuable of any in the United States. There is a strange similarity in the respective positions of Minneapolis and Rat Portage, Minneapolis standing in the same relation to the North-Western States of America as Rat Portage does to the Canadian North-West in the manufacture of flour by water-power and its shipment to Eastern markets. For these reasons, and also the facilities there offered for other manufactures, I look upon Rat Portage as destined to become one of the greatest manufacturing centres in the North-West. Already several large mills and manufactoryes are established there, and the recently discovered gold mines in the vicinity are being energetically developed, and are found to yield from 30l. to 40l. per ton of crushed ore. Passing on, you leave the

thickly-wooded district and cross the Red River at Winnipeg by one of four handsome iron bridges, two of which span the Red River and two the Assiniboine River. In strange contrast was my first journey to Fort Garry, when we crossed the same rivers by small rope ferries opposite the fort.

The province of Manitoba, which up to 1881 comprised only about 9,000,000 acres, has since had its boundaries extended, and is now estimated to contain an acreage of 70,000,000. It is the only province as yet formed in the North-West, but five judicial districts have been mapped out, viz., Keewatin, Assiniboia, Saskatchewan, Alberta, and Athabasca, all of which will in time become provinces enjoying representative institutions, as provided for by the articles of the Confederation of the Dominion. The province of Manitoba, like the other provinces of Canada, has a legislature of its own, consisting, at present, of thirty-two members, elected every four years by the people. The deliberations of this assembly are presided over by a Speaker, and are governed by strict parliamentary rules. There is a Lieutenant-Governor appointed every four or five years by the Governor-General of the Dominion in Council. The Cabinet consists of the Provincial Treasurer, Attorney-General, Minister of Public Works, Secretary, Minister of Agriculture, and President of the Council. These Ministers, as in all other constitutional governments, hold office so long as they enjoy the confidence of the Legislative Assembly representing the people. The legislation enacted so far has been of a thoroughly practical character, to meet the growing wants of the country. The province is divided into municipalities, each having a local government of its own, with the right of electing annually a reeve and councillors for the administration of its affairs. There are also school districts, receiving aid in the shape of an annual grant from the Provincial Government. The school system of Manitoba is modelled after that of Ontario to a great extent, but it is widely different in some respects. There are no separate schools, as in the east, but the Catholic and Protestant schools are two distinct and independent branches of the one general system, and no Catholic can be taxed for the support of a Protestant school, nor any Protestant for the support of a Catholic school. The school rate is always levied on this principle, and the Provincial Government gives a grant of 100 dollars a year to each school of both divisions. The great increase in the number of the schools established in all parts of the country is remarkable. In 1871 there were only sixteen schools and 316 pupils in Manitoba all told; but in 1881 the number had grown to 128 schools and 4,919 pupils, and this year to over 250 schools and 10,000 pupils, as shown by the returns. The standard of qualification is very high, but not quite so technical as in some of the eastern provinces. The settlers of Manitoba have this advantage over those of Dakota, where the teachers in most of the rural districts are of the poorest grade, and generally girls, whose education is very superficial indeed. Nearly all the religious denominations

are more or less represented in the country, and in new settlements, where the people are unable to support a church, visiting clergymen arrange to hold regular services, either in the school-house or in one of the farmhouses.

I have already given a short outline of some of the principal towns, but there are other important points in the North-West. Amongst these I may mention Emerson and West Lynne, situated on the international boundary, as you enter the province from the State of Dakota; and also Selkirk, about thirty miles north of Winnipeg, now connected by a short line to the main line of the Canadian Pacific Railway. These are all flourishing towns. Selkirk, from its position near the southern end of Lake Winnipeg, is destined to be the distributing point for all the produce and supplies *via* the lake and river Saskatchewan. Speaking of this noble river, I may say its total length, taking the north branch from the Rocky Mountains to Lake Winnipeg, is 1,054 miles. At the present time there are some eight or ten large steamers plying on its waters, and the improvements now being carried out by the Dominion Government will add largely to its navigation. Already several extensive settlements are established along its banks, and within the next few years these will doubtless increase considerably both in number and importance, especially as some of the finest farming lands in the North-West are to be found there. To the south, then, we have the great trans-continent railway, the Canadian Pacific, with its numerous branches, some of which are already built and in operation, and others projected for immediate construction; and to the north the broad Saskatchewan River, with its fleet of steamers. With such means of communication, can you wonder at the impetus now being given to the rapid settlement of the country? Other railroads are being built and projected throughout the North-West, and within the next ten or fifteen years we may expect to see the whole land one vast network of railways.

Having now given you a slight sketch of the history of the country and its development, the progress of the railway and other means of communication, as well as some of the institutions, it may be well to look at the class of settlers who have already made this country their home, and the practical capabilities of the land for settlement, though on these points so much has recently been said that it is difficult to introduce what has not already been discussed.

First of all are the old settlers, many of whom have since come to the fore, and now hold prominent positions in their native province. Among these a noteworthy figure is the Premier of Manitoba, the Hon. John Norquay—a man of high educational powers and legislative ability, a fluent and eloquent speaker; he has held the reins of power during the greater part of the last decade. The cheapness and the fertility of the land, and the ease with which it can be placed under a state of cultivation, did not fail to attract the attention of

farmers living in the older provinces of the Dominion, and large numbers sold out their farms in Eastern Canada, and removed to the North-West. These settlers were mostly possessed of means, and were of a superior class. Gradually people from Great Britain began to follow in the footsteps of the Canadian farmers, until within the last year or two a very large immigration of British farmers and mechanics has taken place, and this immigration is annually increasing in a remarkable degree. The settlers from Great Britain who have made their homes in the North-West are also of a superior class, most of them having means and some of them considerable capital. There is a large colony of Russian Mennonites, who are settled by themselves, and having brought capital with them, these colonists have managed by their thrift to increase their worldly possessions to a remarkable extent. A colony of Icelanders has also been formed, and these, though very poor when they arrived, have succeeded so well as to induce a large number of their fellow-countrymen to follow them last year to the North-West. Germans, Scandinavians, Dutch, Swiss, and other nationalities are also being attracted to the country, and it is impossible to say, now that the ball of immigration has commenced rolling, to what extent it may not go. The French element in the North-West is one of the oldest in the country, but it has not increased to any great extent of late years as compared with the people of other nationalities. In short, the settlers in the Canadian North-West are, as a rule, of an excellent class, law-abiding and industrious. Lawlessness is not popular there, as was, and is even now, too much the case in the Western States of the Union. As an instance of this, I may state that the Canadian Pacific Railway Company, in the work of construction, have never had the least trouble in the management of the thousands of navvies employed by them in building the road. This is due in a great measure to the fact that in the North-West territories of Canada the sale of intoxicating liquors is prohibited, and anyone known to give or sell liquor to an Indian is liable to a severe punishment. There is, moreover, a law on the statute book of the Province of Manitoba whereby an habitual drunkard may be arrested in his downward course. A complaint has only to be made and proven by his wife or any relative or friend that he is ruining himself and his family by drink, and on the strength of this his name is posted in all places where intoxicating liquors are sold, after which anyone giving or selling him liquor is liable to a heavy penalty.

Through the stories set afloat by the fur traders in the old days, and through the persistent efforts of interested opponents of the country, the climate has been represented as almost unbearable. Well, I lived there seventeen years, and never found such to be the case. Indeed, I have found the raw damp cold of London worse to bear than the clear sharp weather of the North-West. The climate, as can be testified to by thousands of settlers, is eminently healthy, and on this point I cannot do better than quote what the Provincial

Government of Manitoba says in its last annual report:—"On account of the bracing, dry atmosphere, the fluctuations of temperature are not inconveniently felt, as is the case where the atmosphere is more humid. The warm days in summer are generally followed by cool evenings, and such a thing as very sultry and oppressive heat is scarcely known. The warm days, followed by cool nights and copious dews, facilitate the growth of cereals in a wonderful degree. The winters here are also very bracing, proceeding from the same cause, namely, the dryness of our atmosphere. Instead of a Manitoba winter being the dismal hibernating period that its enemies would have it believed, it is a period of rest for nature and of jollity for the people—it is intensely enjoyable rather than tiresome and dreary. In no less favoured clime can be seen such winter skies, such brilliant moonlight. Nowhere else can the same bracing, invigorating atmosphere be breathed. Instead of winter causing a suspension of work here, as is popularly supposed in the east, building operations are carried on all the winter; pile-driving is kept up without intermission. South of the 49th parallel, in the United States, blizzards and other winter storms are more frequent and severe, snow-blockades are more common, and stock perish in large numbers, while here they thrive through the winter." The spring commences early in April, and ploughing is then begun. Winter sets in about the middle of November, so that the farmer has about seven months and a half for farming operations. This time is divided as follows: April and May are devoted to ploughing and seeding; hay time is in June and July, while the crops are ripening; and harvesting takes place in August and September, while in October the pulling of the root crops is proceeded with. Thus the time of the farmer during the warmer months of the year is fully occupied. In winter he takes care of his stock and does other work preparatory for the spring, and hauls his produce to the markets, the roads over the snow being excellent for drawing large loads. Speaking on this much vexed question reminds me of recent meteorological observations in Manitoba, which furnish some interesting facts regarding the sunshine of the province and its influence upon the climate both in winter and summer. These observations show that in Winnipeg and other places of Manitoba, there are in the year comparatively few days that are completely clouded, and that the proportion of sunshine registered at Winnipeg in 1883 was largely in excess of that registered in most of the other towns in the Dominion. While the number of cloudy days in Winnipeg is 53; in Toronto it is 70; in Montreal 72, and in other towns in Eastern Canada even still more. This fact will account to a great extent for the rapid growth of plants in Manitoba during the long days of sunshine which are experienced there at certain periods of the year.

Elevators and storehouses for the reception of grain are being rapidly erected along the line of the Canadian Pacific Railway, so that the farmer may have a ready and near market for his produce.

Some idea of the rapidity of settlement may be gathered from the fact that the export of grain this season is estimated to be upwards of 3,000,000 bushels, against 1,000,000 last year. The harvests in the North-West are not only bountiful, but certain; at least, that is the experience of the last seven or eight years. Late last summer, it is true, a cold wave swept over the whole North American continent, and the wheat crops of Manitoba that were still unharvested suffered with those of the rest of North America from a summer frost, though not to so great an extent. This is, however, a most unusual and exceptional occurrence, and will in all probability not occur again for many years. The floods arising from the overflowing of the rivers in the spring, of which you have doubtless heard, occur at long intervals, affecting only the lands immediately adjoining the stream, and not spreading beyond half a mile at the most from the bank. These floods do not, therefore, affect any considerable portion of the country. Grasshoppers, which in the old days visited the land, doing much damage to crops, are not likely to visit the country again, for the experience of Minnesota and Dakota, two American States, which also suffered from these pests, teaches us that settlement is a sure preventive of the grasshopper visitation. The yield of the crops is certainly wonderful. Wheat averages 30 bushels per acre; oats, 59; barley, 40; peas, 38; potash as high as 600 bushels, while turnips, as a general rule, yield 1,000 bushels to the acre. It has been ascertained that the farmers in the Canadian North-West can afford to sell their wheat, owing to the large yield, 50 per cent. cheaper than those in Minnesota, which is looked upon as the banner State of the Union for wheat-growing.

One gratifying feature in connection with the Canadian North-West is the fact that the settlers who have made their homes there are, as a rule, content and prosperous; nor do they hide their light under a bushel, but seem proud of sounding the praises of their adopted country. On one occasion I received no less than two hundred letters from settler friends of mine, giving me their experience; and I am happy to state that there was not a single case of discontent or regret at having settled in the country—all were happy and prosperous. People on this side have been for some time past kept informed as to what has been termed the "agitation" among Manitoba farmers; and while I have no desire to discuss the pros and cons of the question, yet it must be remembered that the character of this "agitation" is very apt to be misunderstood at this distance from the scene. The promised extension next summer of the South-Western Railway to White Lake, 160 miles from Winnipeg; the opening of the land, hitherto reserved, which that line will serve; the removal of the mile belt restriction along the line of the Canadian Pacific Railway; the further pushing of railway facilities in the fertile belt; the increased facilities and reduced charges between Montreal and Winnipeg—these together will do much to remove any possible reason for discon-

tent. As compared with settlers in the Western States of the Union, farmers in the North-West have far more advantages, and there can be no doubt—judging from past experience—that should real grievances be found to exist, everything in reason will be done by the Dominion Government to satisfy claims that have any justice.

The soil, of course, varies in different localities—in some places it is lighter than others; but, as a rule, it is a rich mould or loam, resting on a deep and tenacious clay subsoil. There are not only numerous rivers, creeks, lakes, and lakelets throughout the country, but it has now been ascertained that good water can be found almost anywhere by digging to a depth of from 10 to 20 feet.

The fuel problem has virtually been solved by the discovery of rich coal deposits in different parts of the country. The coal beds in the Bow and Belly rivers district have been the first to be actually worked, and the result of these workings has been highly satisfactory. The immense extent of these coal beds has been approximately ascertained by surveys under the direction of the Dominion Government Survey, and it is estimated that the quantity of coal underlying a square mile of land in the Bow and Belly rivers district is in one case 4,900,000 tons; in two cases 5,000,000; and in another 9,000,000 tons. The coal is in general exposed on the surface, and there is consequently little labour necessary to the working of the mines. Though no Government surveys have been made in the surrounding districts, coal-bearing rocks are known to extend to the north and west of the parts from which coal is now being taken. Valuable and extensive coal beds are also known to exist in the Souris district, in Southern Manitoba and the south-eastern part of the North-West, and these will shortly be opened up by the projected Manitoba South-Western Branch of the Canadian Pacific Railway. Careful examination shows that the coal deposits in this district are of the tertiary age, consisting of lignite or brown coal, associated with clays and thin sheets of brimstone, and that the beds are so inclined as to make the working easy and inexpensive. The coal is found to burn with a fierce heat, leaving about 5 per cent. of white ash, with no appearance of clinkers. Mining operations are to be commenced next season, and the successful working of these coal beds must prove of immense importance to the city of Winnipeg and the whole of Manitoba and the Canadian North-West. In addition to the coal, however, the banks of the rivers are lined with woods, and the plains are interspersed here and there with clumps of trees. In some cases farmers, it is true, have to haul their wood a good distance, but generally speaking the settlers can always obtain sufficient for their use.

What more can I say about this great country? What greater proof of its adaptability for settlement can there be than the fact that when I first went there seventeen years ago there were only some 10,000 to 12,000 inhabitants (not including the Indians), while now there are said to be some 300,000 settlers, few if any being

discontented with their lot? God forbid that I should ever be the means of causing anyone to break up an established home or sever old and dear ties. But to those who, after deep and careful consideration, decide that it will be better for them to seek some other land, I say, look beyond the sea to this land of promise. Who can tell the future of the great Canadian North-West? Who, a quarter of a century ago, could have predicted the present flourishing condition of the Western States of the Union—with their cities containing hundreds of thousands of people, their immense network of railways, their wonderful institutions, their stupendous trade, and the almost miraculous development of their vast resources? Yet we have in the Canadian North-West a country of equal extent and resources. Why, then, should there not be the same development in the Canadian North-West as there has been during the last twenty-five years in the western territories of the United States?

THE DISCUSSION.

The following is a full Report of the Discussion which followed the reading of the Paper:—

The CHAIRMAN (Lieut.-General R. W. Lowry, C.B.): After the deeply interesting Paper which we have just heard read, it becomes my duty to submit the names of those who have kindly undertaken to take part in the discussion. On looking over those names, since I have been privileged to take this chair, I find that most of them are to me "familiar as household words," and all of them are gentlemen well calculated to interest and enlighten us on the subject on which they have promised to address us. The first is the name of a gentleman deeply honoured in my time in British North America, and which has been increasingly honoured since I left it. I refer to the Hon. Adams G. Archibald. (Applause.)

The Hon. ADAMS G. ARCHIBALD, C.M.G., Q.C.: I do not know that I have very much to say, but I will trouble you with a few remarks on the most interesting and valuable Paper we have heard on the subject of the great North-West. My acquaintance with the district began not quite so early as that of Mr. Begg, but it began very soon afterwards. My first knowledge of the country was acquired when we took over from the Hudson's Bay Company, in 1869, the territory which forms the North-West. Mr. Begg has given a graphic description of this oasis of the desert, and I think very few people apprehend the complete isolation in which the country was placed up to the time it was taken over by the Canadian Government. It lay in the very heart of the continent, separated from the United States, the first barrier of civilisation, by a journey of over 500 miles, and separated from Canada by 800 miles of lakes and swamps. In the far west was the range of the Rocky Mountains, and to the north was the North Pole.

This country had been under the sway of the Hudson's Bay Company since 1670, and had been inhabited since 1811 by a colony of Scotchmen, brought over by Lord Selkirk. The population when I went there consisted of 12,000 souls. From 1811 to 1870 the entire white population of the country did not grow to over 2,000, the remainder, about 10,000, being half-breeds. These half-breeds were of two classes, one deriving their white blood from the French and the other from the Scotch settlers. The latter seemed to devote themselves to the cultivation of the land, while those of French descent became hunters, although in either case not exclusively so. Another distinction was that the French half-breeds were Catholics, while the others were Protestants. Well, the Government took over the territory, after paying 300,000£. to the Hudson's Bay Company, and were called upon to govern it. The question was how they were to get to it. They tried to send a Governor through the State of Minnesota, but, owing to the trouble in the land itself, and sympathy on the part of the State, he did not succeed in getting to our new province. It then became necessary to make the journey another way, starting from the north shore of Lake Superior. This journey had to be made in a birch bark canoe, with a body of Indians, who had been accustomed to the work during the time of the Hudson's Bay Company. Three weeks and three days were spent before we eventually succeeded in getting into the country. Colonel Wolseley had gone just before with his troops for the purpose of putting down the rebellion. Mr. Begg has alluded to the early history of the government of this territory. Under ordinary circumstances it would have been a mistake to grant responsible government to a people so little accustomed to municipal institutions of any kind. In this case I agree with Mr. Begg that it was right. The country could never have been pacified by the prosecution and punishment of offenders in the troubles of the past. It was clear that the concession of responsible government, which gave the people the power to govern themselves as they pleased, was an implied condonation of the past. They could hardly be expected to take active steps to bring their own trusted leaders and friends to punishment for offences in which they had shared or sympathised. There was therefore nothing to be done but to look steadily forward—to ignore as far as possible the past, to be responsible only for the peace of the present and future. This was done, and, though there had never been an election in the country, and although they knew nothing of the ordinary forms of government, yet, in the course of a few months, or a year or so, things went on pretty much as in any other civilised country, and in the course of a few years our proceedings were conducted with as much regularity and system as elsewhere. (Applause.) It struck me that Mr. Begg did not give the Indians all the credit to which they are entitled. He speaks of their great feature as gratitude. I think they may claim something more. I

negotiated the first treaty which was made with them. On that occasion we had among us some 2,000 of these savage Indians from the interior of their territory, and for fourteen days they were engaged in what was to them a most interesting and exciting discussion. During the whole of that time there was not an outrage of any kind—not a single breach of the peace. (Applause.) Is not that something in favour of the Indian character? In this country I would like to see 2,000 of your finest roughs brought together and behave themselves for a fortnight in such a way as that. (Hear, hear.) There is one thing our people have learned with regard to the Indians—that is, if they suspect you, you can do nothing with them; but if they see you are in earnest to benefit them, they give you their entire confidence. (Hear, hear.) I have been engaged with them in several of these treaties, and been constantly with them, and I can say that I always found them faithful and honest—I might almost say native gentlemen. They look like gentlemen. Take an Indian and put a blanket on him, his pose is statuesque. He talks, not like a common peasant, but as a man accustomed to sit round the council fire and to reason and discuss. Any man who puts down the Indian as ignorant and stupid makes the greatest possible mistake. (Applause.) Mr. Begg has spoken of the difficulties of communication in former days. To give you an idea of this, I may mention that, when making the voyage of which I have spoken, along the north shore of Lake Superior, and through the water stretches to Manitoba, we were desirous of not being overloaded with impedimenta, and I, thinking what was required could be forwarded through Minnesota, actually neglected to put in my portmanteau a copy of the law by which the country was to be governed. It was three months before the mail arrived. (Laughter.) For three months I was governing the country without the statutes under which the government had to be conducted. (Renewed laughter.) I will make another confession. This very law excluding the use of spirituous liquors from the Far West was made under the authority of a council which existed only on paper. (Laughter.) It was, however, a right law, which commended itself to the good sense of the people, and the Legislature afterwards confirmed that law. Another curious circumstance occurs to me. In the first election of representatives to the House of Commons the writs were sent out in the mail and buried in the snow banks of Minnesota for three weeks. You know what use an Opposition would make of such an event, even if it were an Opposition of the moderate kind you have in this country. (Laughter.) Fortunately, on ascertaining the facts, we succeeded in getting duplicates of the writs for conducting the elections. These facts, perhaps, are of no value, except as illustrating the change in the condition of the country. Last summer I visited the country again, and the journey, which took over three weeks in former days, now occupied fourteen hours. From Winnipeg to the Rocky Mountains is nine hundred miles, and only fifteen years

ago the journey took forty days. I was there the other day, and the journey took thirty-six hours. When I think of this I cannot help feeling some pride that we have in our new country men with the manliness and pluck to carry forward these enterprises. It shows that we are not degenerating on that side of the water. (Hear, hear.) With regard to the climate, I can entirely corroborate Mr. Begg's statements. I have felt the cold more—the sensation of bitter cold—on the mountains of Wales, with the thermometer two or three degrees below freezing-point, than in Manitoba with the thermometer thirty degrees below freezing-point. In fact, the thermometer is nothing to go by. One or two words in conclusion. The population has increased enormously. When I first went to Winnipeg I went out with my daughter one afternoon, when we made a census of the houses; of which there were seventy. Allowing five for each house, the population would number three hundred and fifty, whilst now the place is inhabited by thirty thousand people. (Applause.) All this has taken place within fifteen years—the greater part of it within four. A change like this is almost unparalleled in the history of the world. From it one may form an idea of what the country is destined to become in a very few years, when the great North-Western plains will be filled by the population now pouring into them in so prodigious a stream. Truly the time is at hand when the Canadian may consider himself "the citizen of no mean country."

Principal DAWSON, C.M.G., F.R.S.: After the exhaustive Paper we have heard read, and the address of my friend Governor Archibald, I feel there is not much to be said on the subject, although, as you might judge from the nature of the soil, Manitoba is a somewhat fertile theme. (Laughter.) You have heard the statements of Mr. Begg in his able Paper, in which I can fully concur. I have had the pleasure of journeying across the Western Plains as far as Calgary; and, looking with the critical eye of an old geologist, my good opinion of the country was very much strengthened in regard to its actual value as a portion of the earth for the support of man. (Hear, hear.) I found the railway—I mean the construction of the track—running out west at the rate of three miles a day, and the manner in which the thousands of workmen were organised and pushed forward the work in the most rapid and systematic manner was itself something worth a long journey to see. It was also interesting to see these thousands of men, from all sorts of places on the face of the earth, behaving in the most orderly way. The country seemed to have no need of police. No doubt the great secret of this is that the people are sober. (Hear, hear.) Nobody can get anything to drink, and some of the old toppers who went out at first took to "pain killer" from the apothecaries. (Laughter.) Undoubtedly, the entire sobriety of the country and the good conduct of the population are something very marked. (Hear, hear.) Another thing very marked is the enthusiasm of the people in regard to the country. One

would think that everybody is a paid agent to puff it. All of them seemed pleased with their prospects, and all of them were interested that others should think well of the land of their adoption. Another curious thing observable in going West is the gradation from Winnipeg—now a city of 30,000 people, with all the appliances of advanced civilisation—to the towns growing up at various distances west, the newest consisting of a few houses made of only a few boards, built on the prairie sod, and of tents figuring as hotels. At Medicine Hat, one of these new places, I found two photographers, three or four billiard rooms, and large shops where nearly everything you could desire was to be had. Some of these towns have newspapers, as well conducted as if they were places of long standing. No doubt the settler will find a cold climate in winter, but the statement must be taken with a good deal of qualification; for although the winter is a time when farm work cannot be carried on in the open air, yet a great deal of work can be done. A multitude of things can be done in the way of building, &c., which you would not think of in this country, where the temperature is very much higher; and although the stoppage of work is somewhat against the poorer population, the wages in summer necessarily come up to meet this. Cold is, after all, only a relative term. My experience of the South of Europe is that the cold is as much felt as in Manitoba, where they make provision for it and do not experience any serious consequences. One other matter. The country has treasures under the surface, as well as upon the surface. It is not to be an agricultural country merely, although such will be the case for a long time; and anyone who has travelled through the great farming districts of Minnesota and Dakota, and the more settled parts of Manitoba, will have an idea of their exuberant fertility and vast productiveness, such as you will hardly realise in any part of Europe. There are three classes of soil in Manitoba and the Western Territories of Canada. There is the great plain of the Red River, a vast country of extreme fertility of soil and of the best climate in the region, both in regard to the length of summer and the temperature of winter. There is the second prairie level, even more extensive, in which the city of Regina stands. This is a valuable wheat country, and is taking a position in the estimation of settlers as equal to the Red River. Then there is the third prairie level, west of Moose Jaw, which many people said would never become a farming country, but be useful only for grazing. It was thought to be too elevated and too dry. I am very glad to see the railway company has established experimental farms in this district, and I have no doubt they will turn out good crops, because the soil is exceedingly fertile, and the amount of rain-fall will increase as the settlement advances. With reference to the wealth under the soil, Mr. Begg has mentioned the gold mines of the country between Lake Superior and Red River, and I have seen very fine specimens of gold from these mines. But the lignite and coal of the western prairie are still

more valuable, especially in a country where the winter is long and wood is scarce. These coals occur in several valuable beds, stretch over a great area, and are in many cases so very accessible that they will afford not only good but cheap fuel, and with the iron ores which occur in the same localities must ultimately afford the basis of manufacturing industries. It must also be borne in mind that the province of British Columbia, west of the Rocky Mountains, is a country rich in gold, silver, and iron, and with large deposits of coal, which have especial importance as being the only coal fields on the Pacific coast of North America, and must ultimately give British Columbia a position on the Pacific similar to that which England has on the Atlantic. Then the farmer of the prairie lands will not only have access to the markets of Eastern Canada and of Europe, but to those of the mining districts of British Columbia and of the shores of the Pacific.

The CHAIRMAN: I have now to call upon one who addressed us with admirable eloquence, and who excited our deep interest, last year. I had the pleasure of knowing him many years ago, when he was acting as chaplain to the regiment I then commanded, and I very much desired to keep him one of Her Majesty's chaplains, but had I been able to do so I should have deprived the Church of a good bishop and one who has done his work thoroughly and well. (Applause.)

The BISHOP of SASKATCHEWAN: I shall only say a few words in confirmation of what has been so well stated by my old friend, Mr. Begg. His lecture has brought back a crowd of memories to my mind—some old, some more recent. Within the last seven or eight months I have travelled over the whole of the Canadian Pacific Railroad, from Winnipeg to Calgary—within the shadow of the Rocky Mountains. What a grand work that railway is! What a great tribute to the determination of character and energy of our people! What a contrast between that rapid and easy journey by rail and another which I made about twelve years ago. I crossed the Assiniboine river near the present railway crossing. Then I was travelling slowly through the country with a waggon and Red River carts. We reached the river. There was no boat, no raft, no ford. Our guide was equal to the occasion. Off went the wheels of the carts: they were then lashed two and two together; this rough framework was covered with a huge sheet of buffalo hide, and thus a circular boat was made; one of the men swam across the river with a rope, and then the extemporised boat was drawn from bank to bank loaded with goods and passengers. Let me speak for a moment of another contrast. Mr. Begg has told you of our early efforts at church building in Winnipeg. In August last I was present at the laying of the foundation of a magnificent church there—Holy Trinity—the successor of the little Holy Trinity chapel built sixteen years ago. I addressed the people as I stood on the corner stone. I reminded them that the little chapel was blown down on the very day on which it was finished. It was

re-built with the broken timbers, but, though we had to some extent a shapely chapel, the building was not watertight, and during the week the dry powdery snow collected under the roof, lying in ambush over the ceiling until Sunday. And then, when the church was warmed, it began to melt and came dripping down both upon preacher and people. There was no pulpit in those days—the sermon was delivered from the steps of the little chancel. I acquired a considerable amount of dexterity in avoiding the falling drops by keeping, so to speak, one eye on the audience and the other on the ceiling. (Laughter.) While I was telling this to the Winnipeg people a sudden thought struck me, and I added, "Oh, ladies and gentlemen, uncomfortable as the dripping water undoubtedly was, it yet saved me from committing one of the most unpardonable offences of which a clergyman can be guilty. I do assure you that whatever my other faults may have been, I could not even once be charged during that entire winter with the fault of preaching a 'dry' sermon." (Laughter.) Let me now say a few words about the Indians. During the long journey through the Saskatchewan and Alberta territories which I made last autumn, I saw many proofs of their wonderful improvement under the fostering care of the Canadian Government. Right under the shadow of the Rocky Mountains I visited a large reservation of the Piegan—a tribe of the Blackfeet. The first Indian I visited was undoubtedly a more than usually favourable specimen of his tribe. He had made great progress, but many others were advancing in the same direction. I saw him reaping a field of barley. The missionary told me that the man had with his own hand ploughed the ground and sowed the seed over eleven acres—including barley, oats, and potatoes; and that he had raised more than enough for his own family, and could sell a portion of his crop to the white settlers. We went into his log hut. I was astonished at what I saw. There were some chairs and bedsteads, a cooking-stove, a cupboard with dishes, an oil lamp, two small tables, while the walls were covered with pictures cut from illustrated newspapers. His wife was grinding coffee in an excellent coffee-mill; while his daughter was employed mending a moccasin or Indian shoe. What a change was here! This Indian, but a few short years ago, was a wild lawless savage, and now he was living a life of industry and order. I could not help feeling thankful for the success of the efforts of the Government in behalf of these poor people, and I look forward very hopefully to the time when the whole Indian population shall be rescued from the darkness of their barbarism, and take their place side by side with the white men, as good and useful citizens of this great Empire. (Applause.) I most heartily endorse what Mr. Begg has said in reference to the dealings of the Hudson's Bay Company in bygone times with the Indians of the North-West. I believe, from long and widely extended observation, that it is mainly to the Hudson's Bay Company's

wise dealings with the Indians that we owe the blessings of peace and tranquility in our great North-West. It is a heritage handed over by the Hudson's Bay Company to the Canadian Government which we cannot be too thankful for. (Applause.) The great success of the company in dealing with the Indians was chiefly, I think, owing to the ability and judgment displayed by their chief factors and chief traders. One of the first things that struck me on my arrival in the North-West eighteen years ago was the intelligence and information possessed by these gentlemen, though they were living in a country so entirely isolated. They were foremost in fostering the educational efforts of those early days. I rejoice to be able to say that the son of one of these officers, after obtaining all the training that the North-West could then give, went to the University of Cambridge, where he graduated in honours some years ago, and after holding some important educational positions in England, is now about to return to the North-West as the head of a college already established on the banks of the Saskatchewan. (Applause.) I need not tell you how thoroughly I agree in the opinion expressed by Mr. Begg on the wonderful fertility of our great North-West. One great point must never be lost sight of. It is, that the acquisition of the fertile lands of Manitoba and the Saskatchewan Valley is destined to be of vast benefit to the Imperial interests of England. Just weigh for a moment the following significant fact:—During the last thirty years no fewer than five millions of people have left the shores of Great Britain. Of these, three millions three hundred thousand have gone to the United States of America. No doubt they have all, or nearly all, become citizens of the Republic. Now I have no jealousy whatever of the American Republic. (Applause.) A Briton, a member of this great English Empire, I feel that I need not be jealous of any country on the face of the globe—but I feel also that it is of vast importance to the interests of this British Empire that we should not lose the allegiance of the subjects of the Queen. (Applause.) Every emigrant who finds his way from England to the United States carries with him a certain commercial value, to the advantage of that country, and to the detriment of old England; and I cannot help expressing my profound astonishment when I think that this all-important fact is so little recognised, even among the educated and highly intelligent classes of England. (Applause.) Let me remind you that the man who goes to the United States will find it necessary, if he is to promote his own interests there, to become a citizen of that country. Now what does this citizenship involve? First, the man must swear that he will be faithful to the United States (we do not object to that); and secondly (and I ask every patriotic Englishman to weigh well the words), he solemnly swears by Almighty God that he renounces for ever his allegiance to the Queen of England. Is not that a serious matter for our consideration? (Great applause.) And will you not heartily concur with me when I say that the

Royal Colonial Institute, by the care with which it seeks to foster the spirit of mutual attachment between England and her colonies, stretching as they do through all the habitable parts of the globe, deserves the approbation and hearty thanks of every true British subject? (Great applause.)

The Hon. DONALD A. SMITH: After what you have heard from Mr. Begg and the different speakers who have followed him, I am sure you will feel that anything from me can be of very little interest indeed. I feel it so myself. But I must say we are greatly indebted to Mr. Begg for his excellent, interesting, and instructive Paper. (Hear, hear.) Knowing Mr. Begg, as I have done for many years, I felt sure, on learning that he was to read the Paper, that he would do his work heartily and well. It gives me much pleasure also to hear my old and much respected friend Governor Archibald. I knew him in the first years of the organisation of Manitoba and the North-West in connection with Canada, and I know how well and admirably he administered the affairs of both. (Hear, hear.) Without disparaging any Lieutenant-Governor who has followed him, I may say we perhaps never have had one who did so well—no one, in fact, could have done better under the circumstances—the exceptional and difficult circumstances—with which he had to contend. (Applause.) He came immediately after the insurrection, when things were very unsettled, and when he left he had done a great deal to develop and consolidate the North-West. Just a word by way of correction. In speaking of the first efforts to reach the country Mr. Begg mentioned Mr. Hill, Mr. Stephen, and others, but did not at the time think of another gentleman who did a very great deal to open the country—I mean Mr. Norman William Kittson, the gentleman who first introduced steam navigation on the Red River, and not Mr. Hill, who followed and also did good work in the same direction. Before Governor Archibald there was a little episode in the history of the country perhaps worth relating. At Portage la Prairie, a very excellent man, Mr. Spence, not satisfied with the Government of Assiniboia, formed a government of his own, and got an attorney-general and a councillor. But there was high treason. The councillor rebelled, and it is said they held a council on him, and condemned him. (Laughter.) But he was a sturdy man, and being stronger than the others put together, routed them; and such was the collapse of that other government. (Laughter.) It has been mentioned that we have prohibition in the North-West—a law preventing the introduction of spirituous liquors. It is not generally known that to the Hudson's Bay Company is owing the introduction of the law. At the last meeting of the company as a government, in June, 1870—I happened myself to preside at the council—a resolution was passed prohibiting the introduction of spirituous liquors into the country. Immediately on the formation of Manitoba my friend Mr. Archibald appointed councillors for the North-West, and at their first council this law was confirmed. That is

the origin of the Prohibition Law of the North-West. I may say, as I have said on other occasions, that perhaps in no other country is such a law less needed than in the North-West. There, nature herself has in a great measure prohibited the use of strong drinks. The climate gives a tone—there is a tonic in the air equal to the very best champagne. (Hear, hear, and laughter.) You feel very little desire for indulging in champagne, or even in Scotch whiskey. It is really felt by those who have taken a little occasionally, in England and in the Eastern Provinces of Canada, that when they go to the North-West they have not the same desire for it. You have heard about the crops of the country. Let me give you an example of what may be expected in the North-West. Some fourteen years ago, in the whole of the neighbouring State of Minnesota and the adjoining territory—not yet a State—of Dakota, lying between Manitoba and 100 miles north of St. Paul's, there was not a single bushel of wheat grown. Last year, besides a large quantity of Indian corn and a very large number of cattle, that country had a surplus of no less than 25 million bushels of wheat. (Hear, hear.) That is in a country which is certainly not superior, and which I believe is not equal, to the North-West. The climate is even better than that of Minnesota, the soil richer and more lasting in character. The question of education has been spoken of, and it must be satisfactory to intending settlers to know that the school system is such that immediately settlements are formed they are provided with good schools; and, further, I may mention that the University of Manitoba is open to all denominations of Christians. Associated with that institution you have the Church of England, Roman Catholics, Presbyterians, and others joining hand-in-hand to educate the people, and in their efforts to make the country more and more worthy of the Dominion of which it happily forms a part, and of this Old England of which none are more proud, and none love more fondly, than we Canadians. (Applause.)

MR. SANDFORD FLEMING, C.M.G.: At this late hour I will not detain you with any remarks, but merely say with what pleasure I have listened to Mr. Begg's able and instructive Paper, and the interesting discussion that has followed.

MR. J. G. COLMER: I also will not detain the meeting at this hour, after the many interesting speeches we have had, but I am very glad to have the opportunity of congratulating Mr. Begg publicly on his able and instructive Paper. I am sure I am expressing a general feeling when I say that we have spent a most pleasant hour in listening to his remarks. (Hear, hear.) It is not given to everyone to be able to speak from 17 years' experience of the great North-West—a circumstance which has added considerably to the value of the Paper, and you will agree with me that Mr. Begg has served up the dish in a bright and attractive way. We ought to be very grateful to those United States mosquitoes that they did not altogether demolish him on his first eventful journey to Fort Garry. (Laughter.) There are, I notice, some

gentlemen present belonging to the British Association, who will probably visit Canada shortly. I would like therefore to add that Manitoba is not the whole of Canada. It is undoubtedly a bright jewel, and will become still more brilliant, but there are other provinces which have attained a position that Manitoba does not yet occupy. It is but one of the cluster of gems which together form that Dominion of Canada we are so proud of. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. E. HEPPLE HALL: At this late hour I should probably best consult the feelings of this audience by moving that the discussion on a Paper of this importance be adjourned to another evening. I can scarcely hope to keep the meeting together during the ten minutes allotted to me, and I would very much wish to offer one or two practical suggestions upon the land scheme of the Canadian Pacific Road, which I would hope Mr. Begg would think worthy of consideration.

The CHAIRMAN: As far as I myself am concerned, I can scarcely say that the proposal meets with my approval. I think we have nearly exhausted a very interesting subject—(hear, hear)—and there is still a little time left. If, however, there is any desire that the meeting should be adjourned I will put the question to the vote. My experience of adjourned meetings is that the first freshness of the discussion is not afterwards maintained. (Hear, hear.)

The audience having signified their desire that the discussion should proceed,

Mr. HALL continued: I would like to ask Mr. Begg, in the interest of the emigrants who have been proceeding to Canada in such numbers—when the railway is completed, we may hope the numbers will be doubled—whether the locking up of the public land in the hands of so-called public companies is not a positive detriment to the emigrant who goes out ostensibly and in reality to get land? We all know that the production of wheat in Manitoba is something prodigious. When I went up there I heard a great deal about 40 and 50 bushels to the acre, and I thought among so much wheat there must be a considerable amount of chaff. (Laughter.) I found, however, that these enormous crops were grown. There are two burning questions connected with the Canadian emigration. One is the Pacific Road, in which all present must feel an interest; the other is with regard to the locking-up of the land in the hands of so-called public companies; who, to the manifest detriment of the emigrants, persist in asking higher prices than either the Dominion Government, the Canadian Pacific Road, or the Hudson's Bay Company. This I look upon as a considerable obstacle. Another obstacle is the lack of transportation. Are we not, in giving over such magnificent lands to the Canadian Pacific Road, parting with the fee simple of the public domain to a corporation which under its present charter is not bound to give the intending settler, or the actual settler, those facilities for the

transportation of his wheat crop to the seaboard of Europe which they ought to be bound to give? We are parting with a privilege which is immensely important and immensely valuable. I am not proposing to assert on my own authority that the Canadian Pacific Road propose to create a monopoly. I am far from asserting that. But I say there should be in the future conduct of the road a greater degree of liberality towards the settler upon the wheat lands of Manitoba in regard to the facilities of shipment than they have hitherto shown. I have only this evening seen that in the Dominion Parliament it is proposed that an outlet to the ocean should be gained by the purchase of the North Shore Railway from the Grand Trunk. That is only another evidence that nothing but a trans-continental highway will satisfy the Canadian Pacific Road, and I hope that in the future the legislation of the Dominion Government may be of such a character as to circumscribe to some extent the vast operations of the Canadian Pacific Road.

Mr. ALEXANDER BEGG: I will say but a few words in reply to the points on which Mr. Hall has touched. It seems he has not had the latest information from Canada. According to the latest news, the Canadian Pacific Railway intend to carry wheat from the North-West to Montreal at a rate of from 25 to 28 cents a bushel, which, considering the distance, is very much below the rate of any other road on the North American continent. (Hear, hear.) I might make an estimate showing how the farmers can send their wheat to the seaboard at a profit. It must be borne in mind, in making this estimate, that the prices of wheat during the past year have been exceptionally low. To be within the mark, we may take the value of a bushel at Montreal—the shipping port to this side—at one dollar, or say four shillings. The freight charged from Winnipeg to Manitoba would be 28 cents, including storage and other charges. Thus, the farmer in the North-West receives 70 cents per bushel for wheat at Montreal. At 30 bushels to the acre, the return to the farmer would thus be, for an acre of wheat, 21 dollars. The cost of the raising of wheat in the North-West is agreed to be 7 dollars per acre, so that there would be a net profit of 14 dollars per acre, or 2l. 18s. 4d. (Hear, hear.) It is only this year that such facilities for transport have been offered. I may add that the completion of the line over the north shore of Lake Superior will give an alternative outlet, with increased benefit to the farmers. (Hear, hear.)

The CHAIRMAN: When, a few hours ago, the honorary secretary did me the honour of asking me to take the chair, I felt very much inclined to say with the poet—

And must the lyre, so long divine,
Degenerate into hands like mine?

My only qualification is, as I dare say Mr. Young knew, that I am an ardent lover of Canada. I spent ten years in command of a regiment in that good country, and the recollection of the loyalty

and hearty goodwill of the people still lives aglow within me. With all my heart I wish them prosperity, and am thankful to come here from time to time and hear such able Papers throw open the subject of that country to those who inhabit this smaller one. The more we bind ourselves to that great land, and to the other dependencies of Great Britain, the happier and the better it will be for us and for them. (Hear, hear.) I am thankful to the Bishop for his kind tribute to the Royal Colonial Institute and the good work that Institute is doing. In the name of the Institute—and I think I have your suffrages—I beg to tender our hearty thanks to Mr. Begg for his able and admirable Paper. (Applause.)

MR. FREDERICK YOUNG : Before we separate I would detain you one moment whilst I propose that our hearty thanks be given to our excellent chairman for the kind manner in which he responded at a moment's notice to my application to take the chair in the absence of His Grace the Duke of Manchester. You have all witnessed the mode in which he has discharged the duties of the chair, and I beg in your name to thank him very heartily for his kindness. (Applause.)